

## The Eagle

LIFE.

Let us be like a bird, one instant lighted  
Upon a twig that swags;  
He feels it yield, but sings on, unafraid,  
Knowing he hath his wings.

—Victor Hugo. (Translated by Edwin Arnold.)

## THE MINUET.

We were all sitting around the grate fire that cold August afternoon—Matie with her book, Cora and Jack in the corner near the window, mildly flirting over a game of "patience," and I crocheting, and occasionally looking over Richard's shoulder at our house plans, which promised to be as lovely as a fairy tale, and as the time they were fully elaborated.

"A cheerful group," said the doctor, coming in with a rush of chilly air, and, stooping before the grate, he lighted his cigar with a look of great contentment.

"It makes me perfectly sick to see the sky so dark and these great trees waving in the wind," said Cora. "Mr. Heywood, would you mind changing places with me and letting me sit with my back to the window?"

"But I cannot see you so well."

"But I can see you so much better—please do—thank you very much. Mrs. Ames, doesn't it give you a creepy feel to hear the wind sighing in the chimney like that?"

"Why, no; it only makes me feel how cozy we are here," said I. "I will tell you what I do mind, though. Cora, the creaking of those boards in the door upstairs."

"(We will not have any creaky boards when we get our new house built," murmured Richard, dreamily.)

"Yes, I know; just like a ghost's footsteps. So much for the delights of a house in the country," said Cora.

"Oh, come now," interposed Jack; "ghosts have no footsteps. They glide around, don't you know, in a perfectly impossible serene manner, and never were known to make a noise. You may have seen a ghost, but you never heard one."

"I have," said the doctor, unexpectedly. "Really? Oh, do tell us when!" exclaimed Cora, looking up with wide open, startled eyes.

"Shall I? Do you want to hear the story?" asked the doctor. He spoke to us all, but he looked at Matie. She smiled. Matie never wasted any words, but she seemed quite satisfied, and, leaning against a corner of the mantel, he began.

"It was when I was in Germany, five years ago. I had got through with my hospital work in New York, and I went abroad early in April, intending to stay in Germany about six months. I was almost a stranger in B—, but for a few letters I had to acquaint myself with the city, and since I knew so little German I determined to live with a German family for a time and learn the language. I liked this plan extremely, so far as the German itself was concerned, but I was not especially charmed with the German fashion of sleeping between two feather beds, which my landlady instructed me were to be shaken up into the middle on cold nights, and on warm nights to each side, so as to leave me nothing but the ticking for a covering. I also had difficulty in procuring a generous supply of towels, and was still debating in my own mind whether to stay or to leave, when one of my German acquaintances, a very jolly fellow by the name of Alberti, came to me one day after a lecture we had both attended.

"My friend," he said, for I made him talk English with me, "what say you to taking bachelor quarters with me for a month?"

"When, Alberti?" I asked. And then he told me his plan. Some friends of his named Hoffman were going up presently to one of the baths, servant and all, and being quiet people, not much given to journeying, they were a little anxious about their house, and had asked Alberti if he would not occupy it, as if it were his own, until their return. So in the evening we went to look at the house, and dined where we would. I do not know why he should have chosen me of all his friends to room with him, but I liked him, and I caught eagerly at his proposal. We settled ourselves there the following week.

It was a very old house, and rather a small one, wedged in between two more pretentious establishments, on a quiet, pleasant side street. It was prettily and quaintly furnished; had a modern upright piano in the parlor, and an antique porcelain stove. All the little Alberti said for me had told his friends that he would not be responsible for anything breakable, so the rooms had a comfortable, airy look which a man enjoys. We got our meals at a restaurant, or cooked them ourselves, attended our lectures or concerts, studied and walked together, and nothing unusual happened until Alberti came on one Friday night saying:

"My friend, I have to go home to-morrow. I hear my sister is sick. Shall you mind being left alone a night or two?"

"I assured him I should not mind it, and helped him off the following day.

"It was the next night, Sunday night, that I came home at 9 o'clock from a long, solitary stroll and sat down in my window upstairs to smoke a pipe. It was a beautiful, moonlight evening, and the air was very still. Suddenly I heard the tones of a piano, and put my head out of the window to listen, but the sound did not seem to come from the street, but from below me. I listened intently, but it had ceased. Presently it began again in the same way, just a note or two, and then over again. It was unmistakably from down stairs. Next I heard a low chord, followed immediately by a very sweet and charming melody quite unfamiliar to me. It seemed to me to be in minuet time, and was played with the strictest precision and delicacy, but in an old-fashioned style, and with scarcely any use of the pedal.

"I had looked the house when I came in. No one could have come in since. What, then, was playing down stairs? I determined to go down and see. The house was so full of moonlight that I did not need a candle to see my way. I descended the staircase, still hearing the sweet, full tones of the German piano, and, noiselessly throwing open the parlor door, stood for a moment upon the threshold.

"By the bright light which flooded that part of the room, leaving the rest in greater obscurity, I could see that the piano stool was empty, and yet the melody went on. The air was full of it, and I accidentally touched the piano case I felt the vibration.

"I stood still a moment, bewildered; then, going forward, I stretched out my hand above the piano stool, a little above it. Instantly I drew it back, tingling as if I had received an electric shock.

"I will not deny that I was frightened. There was something so unaccountable in the whole affair that I felt as if I must be dreaming, especially since the music had abruptly ceased.

"Alberti and I had had a number of speculative conversations over our pipes. He was a very imaginative fellow and used to maintain earnestly that only a thin veil lay between us and the unseen world. And his opinion he persisted in, undisturbed by my ridicule. I thought of him now, wondering what he would do in my place. Finally I spoke.

"Whoever you are," I said, addressing the piano stool, "if you can speak to me I ask you to do so. No reply came. The room was as still as death perfectly still. I spoke again. 'If you cannot speak,'

said I, 'please go on playing.' A faint murmur or two, the music began again, with the same low chord, and the same melody was repeated to the end. There the playing stopped; and as I once more boldly thrust out my hand, I felt nothing but the air.

"I was almost afraid to leave the room, not knowing whether I might not leave the invisible presence behind me; but I did at last go upstairs, where I lay awake a long time, trying to explain what I had heard. Of one thing I was sure—the touch upon the piano had been by a woman's hand.

"Alberti did not return on Monday. He wrote to me that his sister was better, but he did not dare to leave her yet. I stayed alone, accordingly, for several nights, and was not in the least disturbed by any other unusual performance. When Alberti did come back at last he had so much to say in regard to a proposed excursion into the Tyrol that I dropped my adventure out of my head.

"Indeed, although I tried to remember the music once or twice, it was gone completely, and I had nearly dismissed the whole thing from my mind as a freak of my imagination, until last May, when I went to hear the famous Franzen in Marston, where she had made an engagement for an afternoon recital.

"I was a little late, and when I asked the usher for a programme he said he was very sorry, but they were all gone. So I should judge it was about the middle of the recital when the fraulen, looking what was the next number on her programme, struck a low chord, and began, to my amazement, to play the air I had heard once before. She played it in the same dainty way, but with more freedom, less formality in the performance, and every note vividly recalled the quaint German parlor, as it was that night, with the bright stream of moonlight on the floor.

"In the slight recess which followed I heard a pleasant voice behind me say, 'Isn't that a sweet little minuet? And such a romantic story about it, too!'

"I turned around and faced the young lady who had spoken.

"Pardon me," I said, "but will you kindly tell me what the story was?"

"She colored a little.

"Certainly, sir," she answered, "it was when I was in Germany, five years ago, on my programme."

"I am greatly obliged," I said, as she stopped; and I was so indeed, for now I felt certain whose hand had played the minuet that night.

"By Jove," exclaimed Jack, as the doctor finished, "for several moments he gazed thoughtfully into the fire. Cora was a rather awed look upon her pretty, saucy face. But Matie, who had not moved during the story, looked up and smiled at the doctor, eloquently with a smile.—Hartford Times.

## The Housewife in New York.

There are roofs, too, where something is always being fixed. Now it is a patch in the tin, which one roofer makes in a leisurely way, with frequent rests and pipes, while his chum sleeps in the shade of a chimney stack; then it is the telephone line, setting up a frame to string wire on, and again a couple of bricklayers, with a trowel and a bucket of mortar, plastering up a chimney and making a day's work of what could be done in an hour.

The fat man who hauls a mattress up the scuttle and takes a nap in the free air every evening from dinner to bed time will break his neck some day unless he reforms his habit of dreaming and rolling around like a porpoise in a lively sea, and only a miracle will save the boy who rushes a kite from some day walking backwards off the gutter and making a pancake of himself four stories below.

The young man with the absent expression who sits on the top of the chimney to contemplate the sunset and the stars must be a poet, or he is a fool. The young woman who brings a book up with her and sits in the scuttle to read it, while her little dog chases the sparrows and barks at the cat, would make a good match for him, one would fancy.

The cat, by the way, is the presiding spirit of all the roofs one sees from a back window. He is always gaunt and scrawny and lazy; he always has a disreputable look and a tough manner, and it would puzzle even the inspiration of Mrs. Debar to tell in what house he belongs, for whenever he finds a scuttling open he goes down as cunningly as if he had inhabited that special house and no other all his life. He generally comes out again with more celerity, frequently followed by an old shoe or a beer bottle, or some kind of convenient missile, but as soon as he is on the roof again he begins his nocturnal gravity, and sits down to wash his ragged fur and warm his bruises in the friendly sun.—Alfred Trumble in New York News.

## The Freemasonry Among Car Porters.

As is well known to the traveling public, it is the custom to give the porter of a sleeping car a quarter each morning for his attention in shining shoes and brushing off the clothes of the traveler. Occasionally there is a man too mean to do this, and the porter cuts a notch in the heel of his shoe. This is a signal which all the other porters will recognize, and shoes with a notch on the outside of the heel will not be blackened, as the owner then is "D. B."—Recently Ed. Hewitt was a passenger on a Cincinnati Southern train, and Conductor Kelly was telling him of this freemasonry among the knights of the brush. Ed, who is always generous with tips, showed so much interest in the matter that Kelly got hold of him shoes that night and noticed them. Then he told a friend at the Burnet house about it, who engaged Barrister Hewitt in conversation on the subject, and much to his discomfort, showed him his own shoes were notched. He tumbled to Kelly's joke.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

## French Population of New York.

The industries of the denizens of le Quartier Francaise are those which are characteristic of them at home and abroad. They are essentially light, and call for the exercise of taste and skill rather than strength or manual labor. The men who have neither a profession nor an income are for the most part curriers in stone or wood, engravers and jewelers. They also monopolize to a great extent the milliners' supplies trades, and here is really made the greater proportion of the delicate artificial flowers, frills and lace ornaments which are so much in vogue. The women have always been celebrated for the beauty of their embroidery, and in these back alleys are made the lace that will go toward making the gauzy dresses of the belle of the season. Feather dyeing and leaf making are also leading industries. Here, too, are made the more costly toys and the countless valuable articles of bric-a-brac that in time find their way to the drawing rooms of the wealthy. Those who are so fortunate as to be liberally supplied with this world's goods like the gold and silver spoons and the hand painted silks that they pass on so carefully.

Perhaps, with the exception of two or three thousand, every Frenchman in Gotham lives within the limits of this quarter. They are above all things a social people. They are also leading the fashion in France. They are the native tongue. It is variously estimated that there are between twenty-five and thirty thousand French born persons in New York.—New York Press.

## A FOLK LORE SOCIETY.

GATHERING LEGENDS OF THE PEOPLE AND MYTHS OF THE SAVAGES.

The Study of Folk Lore in Europe—Washington Irving's Work—Joel Chandler Harris' "Uncle Remus"—Duty of the New Folk Lore Society.

Last November a circular letter containing a proposal for the formation of a society for the study of folk lore was quietly, and perhaps timidly, sent to a faithful few. Accordingly, a number of well known scholars assembled some weeks ago in University hall, Harvard university, and there formed a folk lore society. The very first rule of the new society reads as follows:

"The American Folk Lore society has for its object the study of folk lore in general, and in particular the collection and publication of the folk lore of North America."

The student of folk lore soon finds that many of the customs and ideas of savages are still retained by the folk, by the people who have shared least in progress. Indeed, he need only read newspaper reports of "clairvoyance," "palmistry," "mediums," "spirit painting," etc., to see primitive ideas still flourishing in our midst; the Irish maid servant, the gambler, the lawyer, alike persist in the belief that wise women can foretell fortune, and invisible artists paint the pictures. Why do people carry things in their pockets for luck? Why are horsehoes nailed over the door and on the headboard? Why do people carry stones and bits of bread to keep away demons? Why is a group of stars called the Bear or the Swan or named after the Phoenix? The tales known to us as fairy stories, handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. These tales make up a large part of the people's lore, in contradistinction to their book lore or scholarly learning. They form by far the larger part of their inheritance from their ancestors.

It was not until the brothers Grimm made their famous collection that much attention was paid to the childish tales current among the European peasantry. Since then the byways and hedges of all Europe have been ransacked by eager and keen-eyed disciples of the Grimms, taking carefully down the marvelous stories as they fell from the lips of the simple minded folk. Now, what was thus taken down not only found its way into print, but also found thousands of delighted readers. Today there is hardly a province in Europe that has not furnished some item to the comparative study of folk lore.

In addition to this folk lore, societies have been established for the express purpose of collecting and preserving those wonderful tales of princesses, heroic knights, balaful sorcerers, which, with most of us, form one of the pleasantest reminiscences of childhood.

About the time that the Grimms were collecting these household tales of the German peasant, the genial "Goethey Crayon" was giving to Americans the legends of the Dutch along the Hudson. Washington Irving was the first of our folk lore writers. The "Legends of Sleepy Hollow" are now being consigned to the pages of American folk lore.

The story of Rip Van Winkle's enticement into the Catskill mountains by the love of whiskey, his long sleep and his return to the village is often regarded as a peculiarly American legend. Yet the simple legend is that the legend is found among half a dozen different peoples, among the Germans, the Scotch, the Russians, the Jews, etc.

Another charming contribution to American folk lore was Joel Chandler Harris' "Nights with Uncle Remus." The book is made up of a number of animal stories, or fables, current among southern negroes in Georgia. We have a number of harmless tricks and pranks played by Brer Rabbit, which Grimm has made so familiar to us under the name of Reynard the Fox. Thus, Professor Crane has traced a great number of the legends of the Old World to the legends of our own country.

It is curious, for example, that many of "Uncle Remus" best stories were heard in all their simplicity by Professor Hart and Mr. Smith on the Amazon river; still more curious is to find that many of the stories related of Mr. Wolf and Brer Rabbit were printed in Latin and Italian before "Uncle Remus" was "born and bawn." How can we account for these wonderful resemblances?

Obviously, it will be the duty of the new Folk Lore society to gather all these popular tales wherever they can be found, be it in the market place or in the parlor. First, some one must look after American folk lore, the brothers Grimm did for the Marchen of the German peasantry. Secondly, some one must do for Indian myths, negro legends, Mexican, Canadian and South American folk lore what Dr. Taylor and Mr. Lang in England, and Trubner and his colleagues in Germany, have done for folk lore in general.—L. J. Vance in The Epoch.

## To Make the Skin Sting Proof.

It is a fact not generally known that, if one holds his breath, wasps, bees and hornets can be handled with impunity. The skin becomes sting proof, and holding the insect by the feet, and giving him a little water, one can see him drive his weapon against the impervious surface with a force that lifts his body with every stroke; but, let the smallest quantity of air escape from the lungs, and the sting will penetrate at once.

I have never seen an exception to this in twenty-five years. I have seen the little insect caught young ladies with very delicate hands to astonish their friends by the performance of this feat; and I saw one so severely stung as to require the services of a physician, through laughing at a witty remark of her sister, forgetting that laughing required breath. For a theory in explanation I am led to believe that holding the breath partially closes the pores of the skin. My experiments in that direction have not been exact enough to be of any scientific value, but I am satisfied that it very sensibly affects the amount of insecticidal perspiration.—W. L. Wilder in Science.

## Origin of Various Usages.

Nearly all the religious and semi-religious prohibitions and usages of the peoples of the world probably had their origin in some material benefit. The cow was hard to raise in India. The cow was most necessary—so the wise priesthood made her sacred and thus preserved her. Hog's flesh was subject to disease in Egypt and Syria, so the hog was made religiously unclean and infested with devils. Pigeons and certain other birds furnished the best of manure, so they were made sacred to insure them in great numbers. Uncleanliness breeds disease, so the priests pronounced certain rivers and pools cleansing to the soul, and thus insured at least a cleansing of the body. Taxes were always obnoxious to men. Gifts to the gods to insure eternal welfare, however, were more freely given. So priests ruled that the obnoxious tax should be paid in offerings upon the altars, which were insured by the fears of unseen and unknowable dangers. Moons would have had a hard time making both ends meet if he had not received the assistance of the gifts of the Lord.—Carter Harrison in Chicago Times.

## Disinfecting Jelly.

A new table ornamentation is jelly film, tinted by electric light. The dish, hidden from observation at first by a silver cover and a mass of flowers, is suddenly revealed with the light shining through the mass from the center, and the effect is electrifying.—Chicago Herald.

## SOME EXPENSIVE LUXURIES.

Costliest Articles in America—Furniture, Jewelry, Books and Flowers.

I have come across a curious paper, compiled by some of those cranks with a passion for figures and statistics and is meant to show how tremendous is the luxury of this city. He begins by saying that Mr. H. G. Marquand has the costliest piano in the world. Steinway made the works and the case—painted by Albert Tadmor—was done in London, the whole costing \$46,000. This stands in Mr. Marquand's famous music room, one of the most luxurious and beautiful chambers in this country. He also has the costliest billiard table in this country, having paid for it in round numbers \$20,000, and everything in the house is on a scale to harmonize with these expensive bits of furniture.

The costliest dinner service ever made was done in this city by Tiffany. Mr. Mackay brought with him from his mines \$75,000 worth of bullion, and this the jeweler made up into a service, asking \$100,000 for the work, making the cost of it in all \$175,000, and no sovereign in Europe cuts from such a gorgeous plate. Yet, strange to say, Mackay is as simple as possible in his manner. The costliest string of pearls in this country belongs to Mrs. Louis Hamersley, and was the one she wore on her neck one night last winter when a thief put his hand in the carriage window and tried to snatch them, succeeding only in breaking the string and scattering the pearls, which were all recovered with the exception of one. He had heard of their price, doubtless—\$50,000—made a dash for them, and Mrs. Willie Van derbilt wears a sultana diamond ring which cost \$48,000, while Mrs. Cornelius has just purchased for \$125,000 the fittings of one room. The late Mrs. Mary Morgan paid \$250,000 for a diamond necklace, and Mrs. Hicks-Lord has one equally as valuable.

The most expensive picture in this country is Meissonier's "1871," which hangs in the Metropolitan museum, presented by Henry Hilton, who paid \$60,500 for it. It has been estimated that this sum would more than cover the entire canvas with \$30 gold pieces. The most expensive book of its size in New York is the 1850 edition of "Shakespeare's Sonnets," of which two copies exist, one in the British museum, and the other owned by the publishers Dodd & Mead. They paid \$5,000 for it, which in weight is about \$480 an ounce. In the Lenox library is a perfect copy of the Mariner or Gutenberg Bible, the first book printed with movable types. It is worth \$25,000, and nothing better has been done since. Crayon lives has an imperfect copy for which he paid \$15,000. J. W. Bouton, the book dealer, sold a Bible the other day for \$10,000. It was originally in three volumes, but by "Graydon's"—the initials of the collector—manuscript, engravings and etchings—it has expanded to sixty imperial folio volumes.—Brooklyn Eagle.

## Experience of a Vegetarian.

Mr. McCrone has always been a very hard worker, and in the field would outwork any of his numerous laborers, who were animal food eaters and troubled with a frequent desire for drink, to gratify which they only required the need of water, but was a source of relaxation as well. He never feels the need of water or other liquids as a beverage, but uses a generous supply of milk in his diet. His general diet consists of oatmeal and milk, Graham bread crackers, vegetable soups, potatoes, corn and other common food, and also considerable fruit of various kinds. His use of drinking water, he thinks, will not average over a quart a year, fruit supplying a great deal of the moisture necessary for the body.

As regards the relief of food it is a well known fact that a most humiliating taste is acquired by entire abstinence from meat, and if this be doubted, a trial of a few weeks, even two weeks, will convince the most skeptical that it is not owing to a keener appetite consequent upon the stoppage of the habitual hearty diet, but that meat really does harm to the human system, such a trial will injure no one. Mr. McCrone thinks three weeks a fair trial, and believes that any one at the end of that time will admit that he feels better and derives more enjoyment from the food he eats, and if continued, will be better in every way for it. He cites the healthier condition of the lowly classes in foreign countries, who are unable from their small means to obtain meat; while those of better means, in the cities principally, live upon animal food and are as a rule of more feeble constitution and in no way so well equipped for life's battle. Consequently the recruiting supply of the armies of those countries is largely from the poorer classes, who have more endurance and are better fighters than their city cousins. They transmit stronger constitutions to their offspring, and are longer lived, and practically free from the pains and ills which humanity is commonly afflicted with. The history of our most nations furnishes strong arguments in favor of his doctrine in their rise, progress, strength and decadence.—Springfield Republican.

## The Captive Prairie Dogs.

"When I was a little boy my father moved from Hoosierdom over upon a broad and blooming prairie in Illinois," said a man to a reporter. "One time my father trapped four or five prairie dogs. I don't know how he managed it; I've forgotten that. I think they must have been young and foolish, like baby rats, which ventured where their pa and ma would never go. My father brought them home, and of course I had to play with them in delight as we fancied them as pretty pets, like squirrels or white rabbits. A cage was quickly fitted up, the captives were placed in it and surrounded by all the dainties which we fancied could tempt them to forget their captivity. Our parents kept us away from the cage, as the little creatures would not touch a morsel of food until they were released. The food previously provided had not been touched. The little prisoners sat wearily on their haunches in the dark extremity of their cell. Childlike curiosity was expressed till the morning, when the cage was again visited. The captives sat in the same position, and no morsel of the varied bill of fare with which we had designed to tempt them had been touched. The water was undiminished in the bowl.

"Another day passed, the third morning came, and we returned to see our pets. The sight that met our eyes I shall never forget. In their hunger and despair the poor captives had eaten their own feces. The bloody stumps were a sad and sickening reproof to our cruelty in depriving the children of the prairie of their food, and which we had guarded us from a terror which they did not attempt to conceal. But we went to place more food before them the next morning. The food previously provided had not been touched. The little prisoners sat wearily on their haunches in the dark extremity of their cell. Childlike curiosity was expressed till the morning, when the cage was again visited. The captives sat in the same position, and no morsel of the varied bill of fare with which we had designed to tempt them had been touched. The water was undiminished in the bowl.

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